Payment of property-Tax

†1285. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether property tax is to be paid by America for American Embassy and other American institutions situated in India;

(b) whether India has been asked to pay Rs. 150 crores property tax in America; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the action being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The diplomatic properties of the US Government are exempt from payment of property tax in India as per the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

(b) In April 2003, the City of New York filed a suit in the District Court of New York seeking establishment of tax liens against Permanent Mission of India (PMI), New York for the part of PMI premises being used to house diplomats below the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary. The City of New York authorities, under New York Law, have imposed a liability, currently valued at approx Rs 150 Crores at the current rate of exchange, on PMI New York.

(c) The Government of India have taken up the matter with the concerned judicial authorities in the US and the matter is currently *sub-judice*.

Low cost housing to EWS

1286. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of policy in which Government are going to provide low cost flats to people who belong to Economically Weaker Section (EWS);

(b) the time-frame and the details about the project thereof; and

(c) whether the project would be executed by private sector or public sector and the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c) The Government has launched the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) to assist cities and towns to check rapid increase in slums in 63 select cities under the Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) Programme. Under the JNNURM, Central assistance support is provided to cities and towns for undertaking slum upgradation including houses at affordable cost, to the urban poor. It is a demand driven scheme and no targets are fixed. For other cities, for taking up housing and

†original notice of the question was received in Hindi.